

AA- 2

OLIVER'S GIFT (log canoe)

Davidsonville, Maryland

OLIVER'S GIFT is a 30'7" sailing log canoe in the racing fleet. She is log-built with carvel-fitted rising planks, a longhead bow, sharp stern, and a beam of 7'3". Her sailing rig consists of two masts with adjustable rake that carry a foresail, mainsail, and large jib. Built in 1947 by Oliver Duke, OLIVER'S GIFT gains her significance for being one of the last 22 surviving Chesapeake Bay racing log canoes that carry on a tradition of racing on the Eastern Shore of Maryland that has existed since the 1840's. OLIVER'S GIFT is of special interest as having been built by one of the better known racing canoe builders of the 1930's and 1940's, Oliver Duke , and for being the last canoe constructed before a revival of interest in canoe building in 1972.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. AA- 2

Magi No. 0203755833

DOE ☐ yes ☒ no

CHESAPEAKE BAY SAILING LOG CANOE FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic OLIVER'S GIFT

and/or common log canoe

2. Location

street & number 3473 Ranger Rd. n/a not for publication

city, town Davidsonville ☒ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland 024 county Anne Arundel 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Duke Adams III

street & number 3473 Ranger Rd. telephone no.: 269-1250

city, town Davidsonville state and zip code Maryland 21035

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. n/a liber

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory

date 1984 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ loc

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

Survey No. AA- 2

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

OLIVER'S GIFT is a 30'7" long sailing log canoe with a racing rig. Log-built with carvel-fitted rising planks she has a sharp, raking longhead bow and a sharp stern. Her beam measures 7'3". Built by noted boatbuilder Oliver Duke in 1947, the canoe has since been owned by the same family and is still active in the racing fleet, racing under No. 10. Her hull is painted the traditional white, with brightwork trim.

The canoe has typical Tilghman-style log construction, with carvel-fitted rising planks and a lapped rubrail at the sheer. The sharp, raking stem has a longhead on which trailboards are mounted, and a long bowsprit. The sharp stern is overhung with an outrigger, or bumpkin, from which the mainsail is controlled. The rudder is hung outboard on pintles. The canoe has a centerboard and carries springboards for use when racing. Her overall appearance is beamy with considerable, but straight, sheer and little flare to the topsides.

The boat carries a racing rig with two adjustable, unstayed masts set into square mast partners in the foredeck and in a thwart midships. The bowsprit is set up with heavy standing rigging--a wire bobstay and two bowsprit shrouds. Sails are a main, foresail, and jib, with assorted light sails. The main and foresails have clubs and sprits. When unstepped, the masts rest on trestles.

The canoe is half-decked, with white-painted washboards and a low coaming encircling the circular cockpit. There is brightwork trim on the sheer rail and inside the cockpit, while the outside of the hull, coated with fiberglass, is painted white with bright red bottom paint. There are solid low rails mounted along the washboards and trailboards with the name OLIVER'S GIFT mounted between two lines of beading on the clipper bow. A small, scrolled billethead marks the front of the bow.

8. Significance

Survey No. AA-2

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1947 Builder/Architect Oliver Duke

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☒ G

Level of Significance: ☒ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being one of the last surviving traditional Chesapeake racing log canoes that carry on a tradition of racing on the Eastern Shore of Maryland that has existed since the 1840's. In addition, it is a surviving representative of the oldest indigenous type of boat on the Bay--the working log canoe--which was developed in the 17th century by early European settlers from the aboriginal dugout canoe.

Used for transportation and for harvesting the rich bounty of the Bay, log canoes changed little over the centuries. Constructed of from two to seven logs and ranging in length from 20 to 35 feet, they were rigged with one or two sharp-headed spritsails with or without a jib set on raking, unstayed pole masts. Easily and cheaply constructed, some 6300 existed in Bay waters in the 1880's. The working canoes first began to be raced in 1840 and by the 1870's area boatbuilders were building canoes specifically for racing, with lighter, thinner hulls and sharper lines. As mast heights increased to increase sail area the canoes became inherently unstable, necessitating the use of springboards and human ballast. Also part of the racing rig is the outrigger added for balance and to enable the sail tender to sit beyond the overlarge mainsail.

With the invention of the gasoline engine many log canoes were converted to power for oystering, but were then converted back to sail as interest in racing waxed and waned over the years. After peak years of popularity in the 1880's and 1890's, interest in log canoe racing waned in the first two decades of the 20th century only to be revived again in the 1920's. The popularity of racing, spearheaded by the Miles River Yacht Club, continued unabated until present day, although the number of vessels active in the fleet has varied considerably.

OLIVER'S GIFT is significant for having been built by Oliver Duke, one of the more noted canoe builders of recent times who also built the surviving canoes NODDY, PATRICIA, and EDMEE S. OLIVER'S GIFT was the last canoe built in the era of the revival of interest in log canoe racing that began in the 1920s. After construction of OLIVER'S GIFT no new log canoes were built for 25 years, until Sidney Dickson built SPIRIT OF WYE TOWN in 1972. Oliver Duke died before completion of OLIVER'S GIFT and the canoe was finished by his nephew Duke Adams, father of the present owner. The senior Duke Adams raced the canoe until the early 1960s when he presented her to the Tred Avon Yacht Club. She was acquired in 1966 by Peter Hersloff and is now owned by Duke Adams II, a Chesapeake Bay pilot. Over the years OLIVER'S GIFT has proved quite successful in racing. Oliver Duke, a naval architect who worked for Sun Shipbuilding in Chester, Pa., built log canoes as a hobby.

Duke's importance as a master designer and craftsman of log canoes is widely recognized; OLIVER'S GIFT is exceptionally significant in representing the later phase of Duke's work, carrying over elements of design and construction employed in his earlier canoes.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1A-2

Brewington, Marion V., Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes (Cambridge, Md.: Cornell Maritime Press, 1963)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name South River, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8	3	6	0	8	4	0	4	3	1	4	0	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

The historic boundary of this movable vessel is co-terminous with the hull. The vessel is usually stored at the location indicated in Item 2.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
n/a			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty and Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society

date May 1984

street & number 201 West Monument Street

telephone (301) 685-3750

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

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Magi No. 0203755833

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title

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<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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Specific dates 1947 **Builder/Architect** Oliver Duke

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

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Survey No.

AA-2

Marion V. Brewington, Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes (Cambridge, Md.: Cornell Maritime Press, 1963)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

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G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M.E. Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society

date 5/84

street & number 201 W. Monument St.

telephone 685-3750

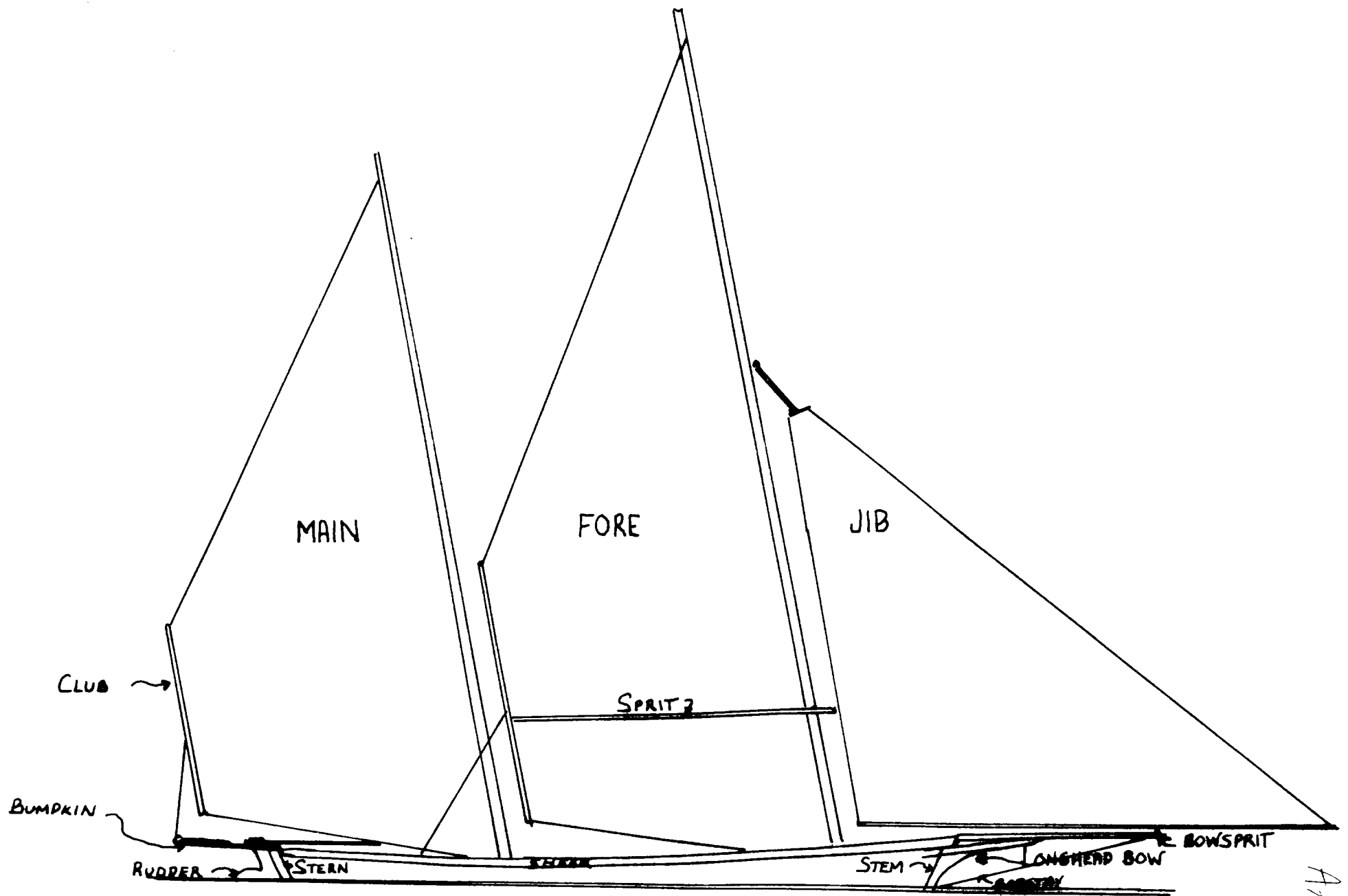
city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

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return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
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(301) 269-2438



SAIL PLAN OF TILGHMAN ISLAND CANOE after drawing by J. G. Earle

44-2

AA-2

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

76° 37' 30" W
39° 00' N
1000 FT
(IDENTION)

76° 37' 30" W
39° 00' N

1000 FT

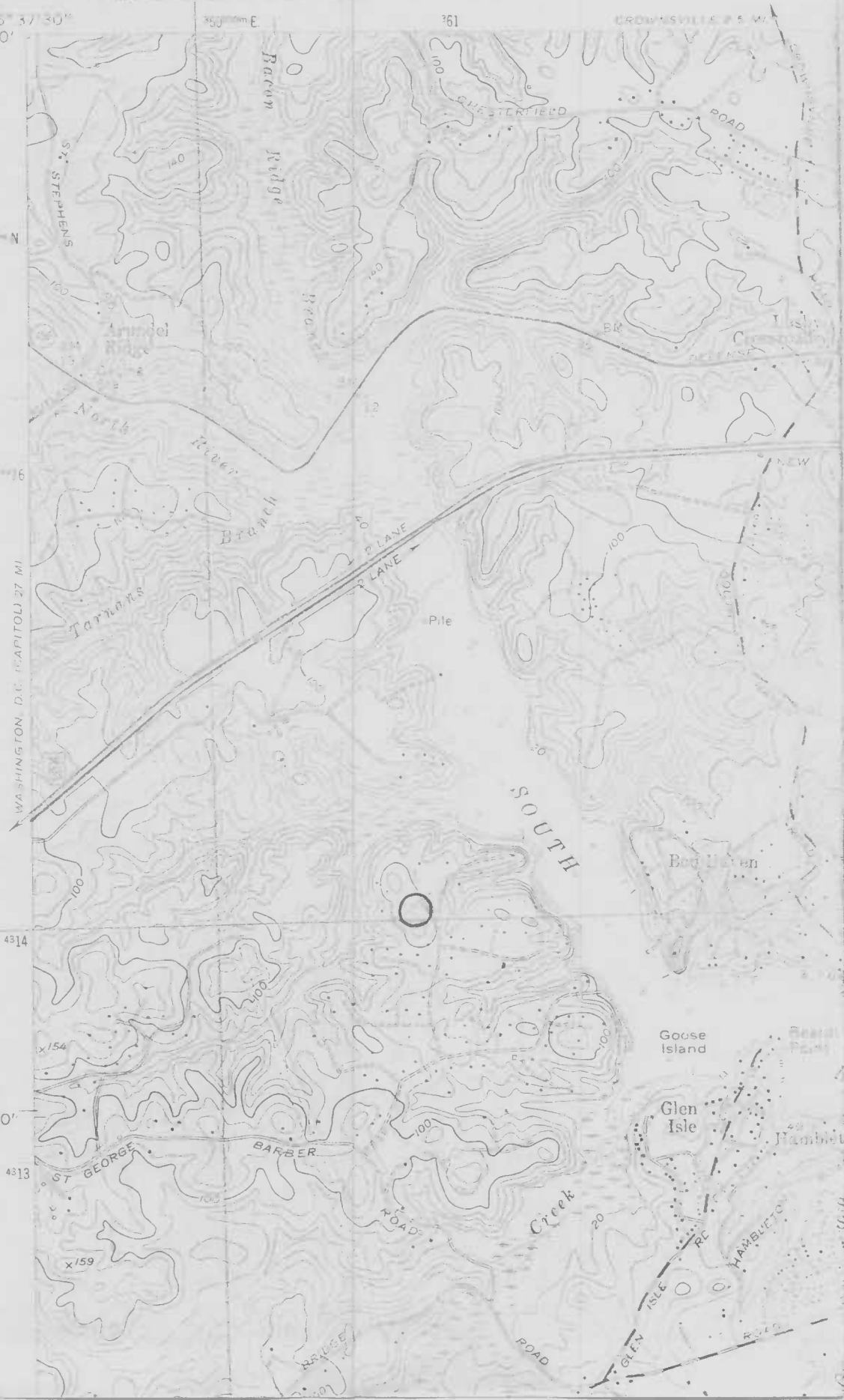
1000 FT

1000 FT

CHESAPEAKE BAY
SAILING-
LOG CANOE
FLEET

THEMATIC GROUP

18-360840-4314040
(AA-375)
OLIVER'S GIFT





AA-375- 2

OLIVER'S GIFT
Davidsonville, Md

interior hull
M. C. Wootton

5/84



AA-375 2

OLIVER'S GIFT
Davidsonville, Md

starboard side
M. C. Wootton 5/84



AA-375 2

OLIVER'S GIFT
Davidsonville, Md

bow

M. C. Wootton 5/84